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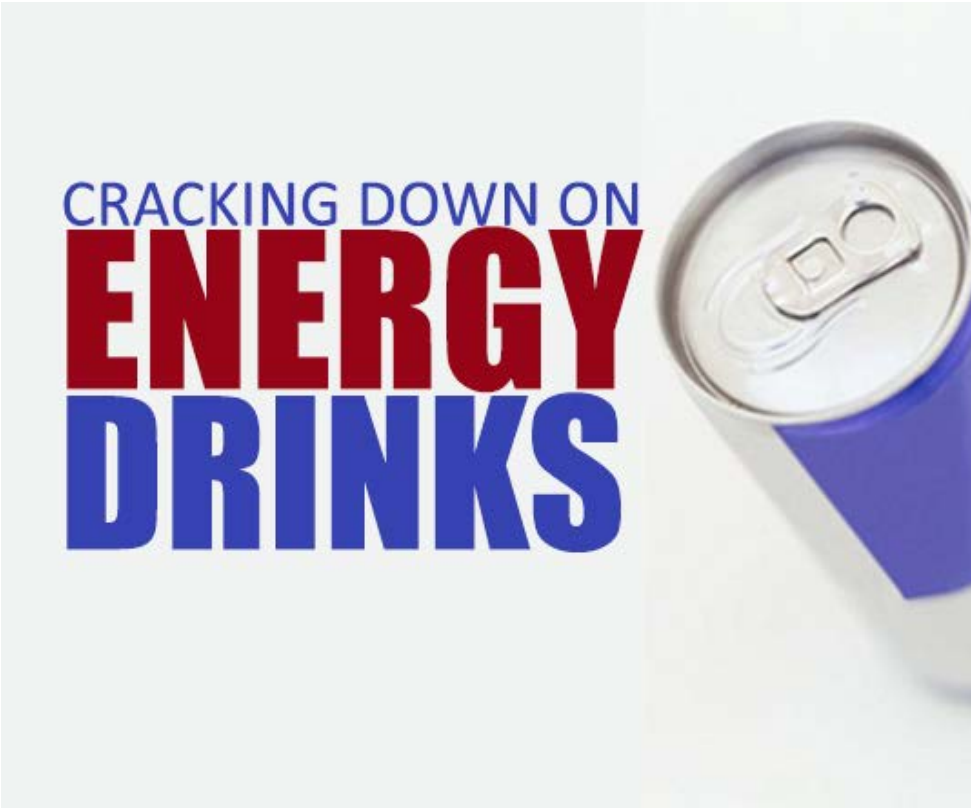
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Cracking Down the Hype on Energy Drinks

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I am a Navy Dietitian, stationed at Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune. Energy drinks have been fast growing hot topics. The idea to consume energy drinks has been increasingly desirable with those seeking more energy from working long hours or simply more energy for performance. Whatever your reasons may be, being knowledgeable on the adverse effects is important to consider and learning about healthier alternatives is key!

Energy Drinks

The terms *energy drinks* and *energy shots* vary amongst their individual components and the way they are retailed in terms of unit volume. The ingredients include caffeine in combination with various other ingredients such as herbal sources of caffeine, botanicals, taurine, B Vitamins and more. Energy drinks are marketed at 250ml units or more and energy shots at 120ml or less. In terms of scientific evidence on the risks and benefits, there has been less research done in energy shots in comparison to energy drinks. According to the Human Performance Resource Center (HPRC), energy drinks have been classified as having

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moderate safety concerns and moderate benefits while energy shots have posed a high risk for safety concerns with moderate benefit. For more information on the Dietary Supplements Classification System- Risks and Benefits go to: <http://hprc-online.org/>

Benefits & Risks on Caffeine and Dosage Recommendations

Caffeine, alone, has shown to be beneficial and improve mental and physical performance in moderate doses up to 200 mg/day or 0.9-2.7mg/lb of body weight. So don't hesitate to have your "pick me ups" if you need them like 2 cups of coffee (200mg), 3 shots of espresso (~200mg) or a tall glass of 40oz tea (200mg) throughout the day. Not to mention you can save so much money, suppose you drink 1 can of an energy drink daily, in a month's time you are looking to spend at least \$75.00 vs \$3.00 per month in making your own coffee at home.

What are the risks? A caffeine dosage surpassing 600mg in adults poses potential adverse effects to include irritability, tremors, insomnia, tachycardia, stomach upset or diarrhea symptoms, and arrhythmias. A study showed those who consumed 3 or more energy drinks per day had sleep issues and disrupted job performance in service members. On a side note, limit caffeine in the evenings at least 6 hours before bed time. Caffeine peaks at 60 minutes and maintained roughly about 2-3hrs thereafter.

Evidence on the caffeine content from energy drinks combined with other herbal and botanical ingredients are inconsistent with showing significant mental and physical performance. Be cautious, the amount of caffeine in Energy drinks or shots are not regulated by the United States Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and are not mandated to disclose the amount of caffeine in the food label.

How Caffeine Can Stack Up:

Breakfast: 16oz Coffee (~200mg) with meal

Snack: 5 hr Energy Shot (200mg) or 16oz Rockstar Zero Carb (240mg)

Lunch: 24oz Mountain Dew soda (110mg) with meal

Dinner: 20oz Tea (100mg) with meal

Total Caffeine= 610-650mg

Other ingredients in Energy Drinks

Aside from recommending avoidance of too many caffeinated beverages, energy drinks have other ingredients that you may not be familiar with. Taurine, an amino acid, is typically found in several energy drinks and shots. There is insufficient evidence to rate the effectiveness of taurine in combination with caffeine in energy drinks. Guarana is a plant seed that naturally contains caffeine to which increases the total caffeine from the energy drink. We now know too much caffeine can lead to adverse effects. Glucuronolactone and panax ginseng are also usual ingredients but no scientific evidence exists in the benefits or risks these have to our health. If you are interested in knowing more about ingredients in supplements and their benefits and risks register to the Natural Medicines website: <https://naturaldatabaseconsumer.therapeuticresearch.com/logon.aspx?s=NDC&cs=dodndc>

Food for Energy

Need more energy throughout the day to improve your job performance, physical performance or daily life task? Start your day with complex carbohydrates for energy to last you throughout the day. Eat whole grains like whole-grain bread, pasta, cereal, brown rice,

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oats, barley, fruits and vegetables. For more information on how to eat for performance visit:
<http://hprc-online.org/nutrition/nutrition-resources>

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health
Having read this I thought it was really informative.
I appreciate you finding the time and energy to put this
informative article together. I once again find myself spending
a lot of time both reading and commenting.
But so what, it was still worth it!

